

## **POTENTIAL OF SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS IN EFFECTIVE PHARMACY MANAGEMENT: A SURVEY**

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### **INTRODUCTION:**

Pharmacy is a place, a career, and sometimes a business. A pharmacy is a place where licensed pharmacists dispense medicine on receiving a valid prescription written by a legal prescriber. A pharmacy is not a drugstore. Some businesses today do not have pharmacies, but do sell medicines bought without a prescription (over the-counter drugs, or OTCs). A pharmacy can be a free-standing building, or it may be found inside other places like a drugstore, a medical office building, or a hospital

Pharmacists are registered by a board of pharmacy, and therefore are designated registered pharmacist. However, this title is only conferred after passing rigorous national, state practice, and law examinations. Pharmacists must always be vigilant for counterfeit prescriptions written by drug abusers who are trying to get

narcotics and other controlled substances illegally. Pharmacy also means the practice of pharmacy as a profession. Pharmacy is an information intensive profession. The availability of affordable computers and the advancement of information technology have resulted in our ability to rapidly and effectively access, retrieve, analyze, share, and store large volumes of information pertinent to patient care.

### **Pharmacy Management System- An Overview**

- ❖ To facilitate operational efficiency across the chain, managements need to arrange the right-fit, Pharmacy management system.
- ❖ Addressing the shortage of pharmacists by streamlining and automating workflow process steps.
- ❖ Streamlining operations through data sharing across store locations allowing patients to order / refill their Rx from any store.
- ❖ Segmentation of work process for efficient division of labor.
- ❖ Systemic data checks to scan impact of drug combinations or drug allergies to ensure patient wellness and provide counseling to improve relationships with the patient

- ❖ Enhancing customer satisfaction levels and repeat business through timely and consistent customer service

### **Applications of Software in Pharmacy Management**

Pharmacy management software is a versatile software solution that cuts down Reports generation time and increases quality & accuracy of the information. Margin on Item(s) or Customer(s), Sales Invoice, Party Ledger, Batch-wise Stock Position Report, Sales Analysis Report, Customer or Supplier Enquiry, Debit Note, Credit Note etc. Software can generate instant up-to-date Balance Sheet, Profit & Loss Statements, Ledgers and information on Batch-wise Stock Position, Area-wise or Collection-boy-wise Outstanding Statements. All these will lead to full utilization of manpower, and enhances business.

### **Objective of the study:**

- ❖ To understand the spread of Pharmacy management software

### **Research Methodology:**

- ❖ A Self administered questionnaire survey was used to extract data from Pharmacies from four different

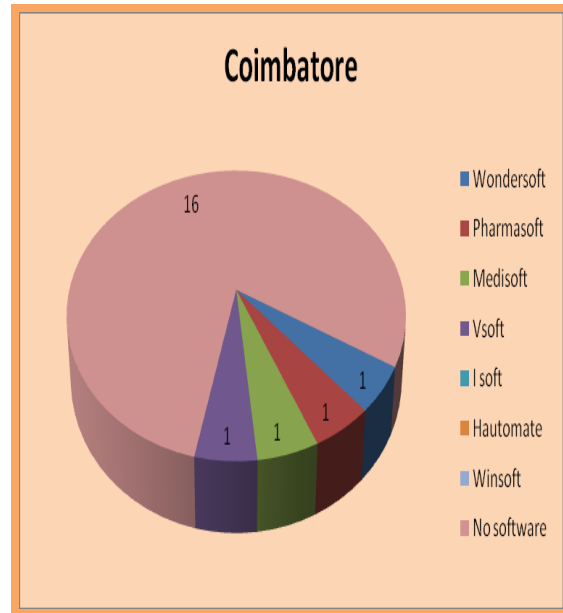
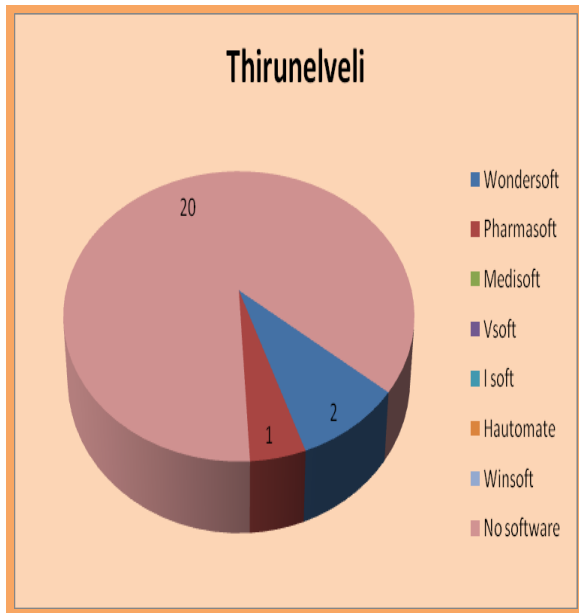
regions of the State of Tamilnadu and Karnataka, i.e., Chennai, Coimbatore, Thirunelveli, Vellore and Mangalore.

- ❖ The Sample size used for the study was 106 pharmacies. The city included were Thirunelveli,; 23 pharmacies 20 pharmacies of Coimbatore, 30 pharmacies of Chennai and 24 pharmacies of Vellore, and 9 pharmacies of Mangalore. The non probability connivance method of sampling is used for the study.
- ❖ The survey was constructed to elicit information in nine primary domains relevant to identifying training needs and system barriers to the expanded use of technology in pharmacy management.
- ❖ The parameters used for study were : Computer Experience, Computer Anxiety, Basic Computer Skills, Internet Skills , Database Information, Access to Computers, Anticipated Future Needs
- ❖ Questions were limited to the hardware, software, and online resources that were currently available to the Pharmacies.

**Results and Discussion:**

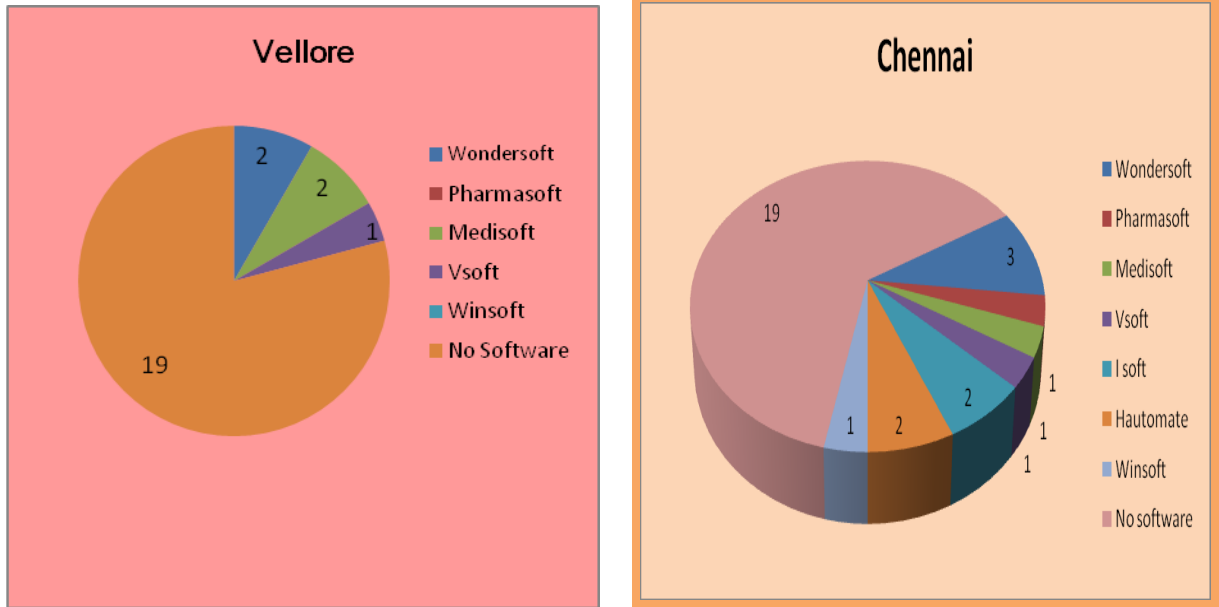
**Table 1. Company wise software Usage of the sample population in the cities.**

Company	Thirunelveli	Coimbatore	Vellore	Chennai	Mangalore
Wondersoft	2	1	2	3	2
Pharmasoft	1	1		1	-
Medisoft	-	1	2	1	-
softscript	-	-	-	-	1
Vsoft	-	1	-	1	-
Wipro	-	-	-	1	1
I soft	-	0	-	2	-
Hautomate	-	0	-	2	-
Winsoft	-	0	1	-	-
No software	20	16	19	19	5
Total	23	20	24	30	9



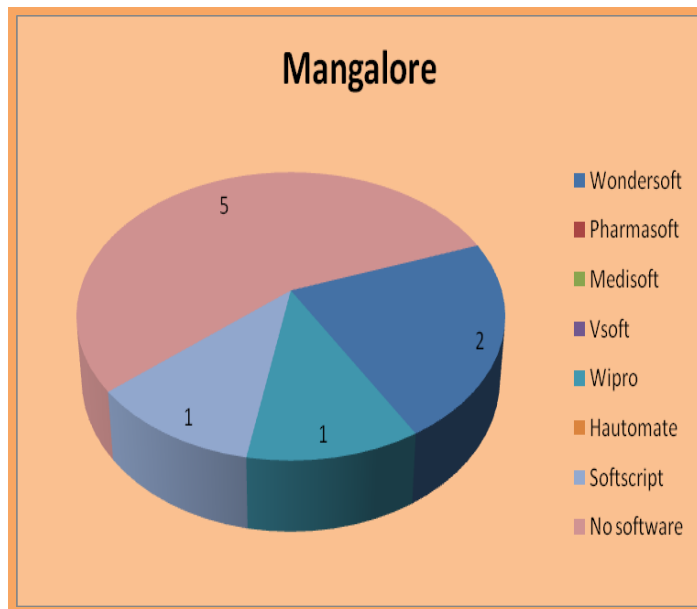
**Fig No. 1&2 Company wise software Usage of the sample population in the city of Thirunelveli & Coimbatore**

- In thirunelveli wondersoft and pharmasoft companies software are used, where as in coimbatore wondersoft,pharmasoft,medisoft and vsoft companies software are in use.



**Fig No. 3&4** Company wise software Usage of the sample population in the city of Vellore and Chennai

- In vellore wondersoft,medisoft,vsoft companies software are used,where as in chennai Wondersoft, Pharmsoft, Medisoft, Vsoft, Isoft, Hautomat, Winsoft companies software are used.

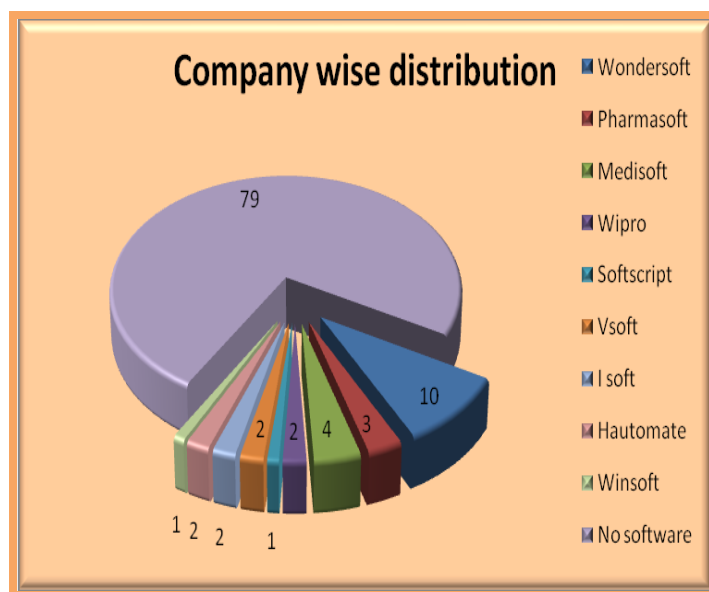


**Fig No. 5** Company wise software Usage of the sample population in the city of Vellore

- In Mangalore wondersoft, softscript,wipro companies software are used.

**Table 2 Company wise software distribution**

Name of softwares	Total no. used
Wondersoft	10
Pharmasoft	3
Medisoft	4
Wipro	2
Softscript	1
Vsoft	2
I soft	2
Hautomate	2
Winsoft	1
No software	79
Total	106



**Fig: No. 6 Company wise software Usage of the total sample population**

- 79% of pharmacy shops do not use the software which are specifically made for the pharmacy drug stores. The use of software in Pharmacy is at nascent stage in these selected

regions. The Wondersoft is generally used followed by Medisoft, Pharmasoft, Wipro, I Soft, Hautomate Softscript .

- The right choice will depend on factors like size, geographical spread and complexities of each organization. Their current state with respect to system sophistication and process standardization are also important considerations.
- Some critical factors that must be considered from the economic and implementation perspectives include:
  - Effort and cost involved in mounting or purchasing the base version.
  - Attempt required organizing the base version across a number of stores.
  - Development of user training modules and ease of transition.
  - Estimated long term maintenance effort and costs.
  - Effort and documentation for support team to stay abreast of developments.
  - Flexibility and ease of enhancements for future business needs.
  - Ability to run different versions in production, test and development for different environments and different applications

### **Conclusion:**

The use of software in Pharmacy is at nascent stage in these selected regions. The Wondersoft is generally used followed by Medisoft, Pharmasoft, Wipro, I Soft, Hautomate Softscript.

The retail pharmacies need to consider the economics and their commitment to any option prior to undertaking a pharmacy management system initiative. Equally important is conducting a thorough due carefulness exercise to identify challenges and strategies for their mitigation. Choosing the right pharmacy system has been one of the tougher questions faced by pharmacies. However, successes in this area show that it is a critical decision that needs to be evaluated and planned for carefully with a 5-10 year roadmap in view. Retailers will need to evaluate their specific environment for opportunities, constraints and their long term vision before deciding whether an approach is aligned with their specific objectives.

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